

Questions for Gary L. Bledsoe (Texas NAACP)
Primary Senator asking questions: Ellis

Q. Some say the Voting Rights Act is no longer needed is a thing of the past that is no longer needed in Texas. Can you cite examples or give reasons that show why we still need voting rights protections?

Q. Is there a well-documented history of voter suppression that is specifically related to race and ethnicity, and how would this Voter ID law fit into that history?

Q. How would this Voter ID law discriminate against people of color?

Q. If the Legislature exempts certain classes of voters, like seniors, from this bill, would that direct an even greater amount of its potential to disenfranchise voters at African Americans and Hispanics?

Q. Did you see the materials the Attorney General used in his highly publicized 2005-2006 campaign against "Voter Fraud"?

Q. In his anti-Voter Fraud campaign, the Attorney General used materials that included images of sickle cell stamps and photos of African Americans to illustrate signs of voter fraud – what does that tell you about the state's attitude and enforcement of voter fraud, and did the conduct and targets of Abbott's prosecutions fit into a pattern of vote suppression in Texas?

Q. Gary, you suggest a photo ID law would suppress African American turnout, but some Voter ID advocates claim Voter ID laws do not suppress turnout, and even claim turnout increases in Indiana and Georgia in 2008 were caused by Voter ID laws, compared to 2004 turnout when there was no photo ID law in those states. Obviously, turnout can vary a lot between election cycles based on enthusiasm, candidates, and other factors. Did African American turnout in Texas increase in 2008 without a Voter ID law, and do you think the reason might be the same as the real reason for reports of higher turnout in Indiana and Georgia?

Questions for Dan Kohrman (AARP)

Primary Senator asking questions: Uresti

Q. What are other state's experiences implementing photo identification requirements to vote?

Q. In other states that have had challenges of similar legislation, how does Texas compare regarding the implementation timeframe? In regards to outreach and notice of new requirements to voters? Relating to poll worker training?

Q. Is the training and notice in the bill sufficient to ensure older Texans will be aware of the new requirements?

Q. What are the potential barriers for older Texans to obtain photo identification? Are there any potential barriers when the state provides the identification for free?

Q. What potential barriers does this legislation pose for voters that may reside with family members or in an assisted living facility or nursing home?

Q. Can you expand on the "different forms of non-photo identification" requirements under this legislation? Does Texas issue a Medicaid card? What information does a Medicare card contain? Does everyone entitled to receive a social security check receive it via mail?

Questions for Dennis Borel (Coalition of Texans with Disabilities)

Primary Senator asking questions: Zaffirini

Q. Are people with disabilities less likely to have a photo ID? If so, why?

Q. Are people with disabilities less likely to have other documents that could be used to verify identity under SB 362? If so, why?

Q. Has Advocacy, Inc. worked with any individuals who would not be able to meet the identification standards of SB 362?

Q. What is required to obtain a photo identification in Texas?

Q. What additional barriers do people with disabilities have in obtaining the forms of ID requested by this bill?

Q. Would the written notice provided for in SB 362 be sufficient to ensure access to accurate information about this new ID requirement information for the full range of people with disabilities in our state?

Q. What would be necessary to ensure that if SB 362 were passed, that the disability community would understand the new law?

Q. What affect do you believe SB 363 would have on turnout of voters with disabilities?

(Q. Could SB 363 negatively impact any voters who have a photo ID?

Q. What affect do you believe SB 363 would have on the number of provisional ballots cast by voters with disabilities?

(Q. In the hotline that Advocacy, Inc runs for voters with disabilities, what are the most pressing issues reported by voters with disabilities? And, does SB 363 address any of these issues?

Q. Are there any issues affecting Texans with disabilities that would better utilize the funds required to implement SB 362?

Q. and A. for Republican Witnesses

(all appropriate Senators should pile on, for their expert witnesses, and ignore their public witnesses)

1. You say the law in Indiana is working...in the Supreme Court case, no party or amicus cited even one case of impersonation at the polls in Indiana to the Supreme Court. Would it surprise you to learn that more Indiana voters have been disenfranchised by the law in the last two years than the number of reported cases of impersonation at the polls cited to the Supreme Court – or from anywhere in the country - in the last two decades?

- In limited-turnout local elections in Marion County, Ind. in 2007, 32 voters cast ballots that could not be counted because of the voter ID law. **Moreover, these were long-time voters: 14 of them had previously voted in at least 10 elections.**
- **At least 10 retired nuns in South Bend, Ind., were barred from voting in the 2008 Indiana Democratic primary election because some of them were in their 80's and 90's and no longer had driver's licenses. The supreme irony was that the nuns whose votes can't be accepted by a bunch of nuns because they don't have an ID...live with them in the polling place in their convent.**
- At least six other people also were relegated to filing provisional ballots. Among them was Lauren McCallick, an 18-year-old freshman at St. Mary's College in South Bend, who said she got "teary-eyed" and then angry at being rejected the first time she was old enough to vote.

2. You and other voter ID advocates cite "studies" that attempt to show Voter ID laws do not suppress turnout, and even try to claim turnout increases in Indiana and Georgia were caused by Voter ID laws. These "studies" compare turnout between election cycles - between 2002 and 2006 or 2004 and 2008. Obviously, turnout can vary a lot between election cycles based on enthusiasm, candidates, and other factors.

- c. **Honestly, isn't the real cause for the 2008 turnout increase in Indiana really all about Barack Obama and John McCain and the excitement they generated and resources they spent in a state that wasn't even competitive in 2004?**
- d. **Wouldn't a more valid analysis compare states with and without Photo ID requirements, over a period spanning several election cycles or the same national election cycle?**

3. How do you explain the fact that every time a thorough independent study looks into claims made repeatedly by Voter ID supporters that suggest thousands of dead people or non-citizens are registering and possibly voting, those claims are, without exception, proven to be wildly off base?

(See briefing paper on Unsubstantiated GOP Claims for answer/facts)

4. You have mentioned the Indiana experience, but even Appeals Judge Posner, an outspoken conservative appointee, said in his opinion upholding the Indiana photo ID

law: **"No doubt most people who don't have photo ID are low on the economic ladder and thus, if they do vote, are more likely to vote for Democratic than Republican candidates. Thus the new law injures the Democratic Party by compelling the party to devote resources to getting to the polls those of its supporters who would otherwise be discouraged by the new law from bothering to vote."** His comment seems to illustrate why Republicans use voter fraud claims to justify vote suppression activities that date back decades and continue today. **Do you have any evidence of systematic voter fraud to contradict findings from academic studies that suggest the only real reason for the photo ID push is to provide Republicans a partisan advantage?**

(See briefing paper on GOP Power Grab for answer/facts)

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